

January 14, 1978
Interviewer - Irene Ruiz
Interviewee - Mrs. Josefa Parra

TAPE 19A Note: This tape is in Spanish.

- 005-015 Mrs. Parra was born in a tiny village in Michoacan, Mexico, February 2, 1906. Her parents were R. Aguilera and (mother) Soledad Chavez.
- 016-022 Moved to Zamora, Michoacan, when Mrs. Parra was 9-10, because of the revolution.
- 023-053 Attended school 3 years in Zamora. Father died, leaving her the oldest of 7 children. Before his death, father's occupation was that of a judge who sat on a committee of 12 people. Committee was responsible for sentencing wrong-doers in the community. Mother was a homemaker.
- 054-076 Came to the U.S. with an aunt and uncle in 1925. Lived briefly in Compton, California and Brighton, Colorado before coming to Kansas City. Uncle had friends in the Argentine district of Kansas City, Kansas.
- 077-083 Uncle got work on the railroad, family lived in the Argentine.
- 084-090 Attended a small Catholic church there. Uncle also enjoyed attending Baptist services.
- 091-103 Came to the West Side in 1951, made new friends. Attends Guadalupe church.
- 104-111 Met husband while working in a small restaurant on the Kansas side. Uncle forbade her to see him. She defied her uncle and was married by a judge.
- 112-117 Eventually had 8 children.
- 118-122 Attended few social functions except on occasional church "jamaica" (Bazaar).
- 123-149 Children now all married. All Baptised in a small church in Kansas, confirmed at Guadalupe.
- 150-171 Recollections of various community members.
- 172-181 Many friends, relatives served in War World II.
- 182-224 Flood of 1951. Knew only one man, a Juan Gonzalez, who drowned. Family lost almost everything. Family split up. She and 4 sons lived with a cousin, 4 daughters went to live with sister-in-law. Rented a basement for awhile.
- 225-236 Red Cross helped family get another house and the entire family was reunited after 4 months. Still lives in the same house.

- 237-249 At one point she was forced to return to Mexico because her papers were not in order. Returned after 4 months.
- 250-262 Children attended Switzer, West Junior and Westport Senior High.
- 263-281 Husband learned English but she never did because she was at home. Children all use Spanish at home.
- 293-316 To help pay bills, she cooked, sewed, babysat for neighbor's children.
- 317-344 Recalls when there were no social agencies like now to help people. Some families sent their daughters to be domestics for wealthy families, but she never allowed her daughters to go. Would not let them stay overnight or babysit in someone else's home.
- 345-362 At one time, husband earned only \$16.00 a week at the packing house.
- 363-419 Children did not get along well in school, much fighting among racial groups. Sent children to St. Thomas school for awhile but they also had problems there.
- 420-439 Neighbors mostly Mexican, railroad or packing house workers.
- 440-452 Married almost 50 years. Husband died 2 years prior to interview.
- 453-549 As a young girl in Zamora, she lived with a wealthy family and cared for their children. Also kept house for another family. Was well prepared for child-care by the time she had her own children.
- 550-608 Husband wanted children to know about Mexican culture and history. Children made fun of him, were not interested. Husband liked to read, joke with the children, talk about history.
- 609-701 Various other family recollections. Mrs. Parra lives alone now that children are all married.